

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 00769 171934Z
ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1819
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T GABORONE 0769

NODIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

BRASILIA, RIO DE JANEIRO FOR WISE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY), BC
SUBJ: RHODESIA: PROPOSED LAGOS SUMMIT

REF: STATE 67374

1. PRESIDENT KHAMA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD A LAGOS SUMMIT WOULD
BE CONDITIONED BY SEVERAL IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS: FIRST,
HE WOULD VERY LIKELY TAKE HIS LEAD FROM OTHER FL PRESIDENTS,
NOTABLY NYERERE AND KAUNDA; SECOND, HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY
LOOK UPON IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, TO

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BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE ON DEVELOPMENTS ON THE MOST CRUCIAL
FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY ISSUES CONFRONTING BOTSWANA;
THIRD, IT WOULD PROVIDE A RARE OPPORTUNITY FOR KHAMA TO
MAKE KNOWN HIS VIEWS AS PRESIDENT OF A COUNTRY WHICH IS
OBLIGED TO LIVE WITH AND SHARE AN OPEN 400-MILE BORDER;
IT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE REGARDED AS OPPORTUNITY TO PRE-
SENT BOTSWANA'S SECURITY NEEDS BY LAYING OUT THE RATIONALE

IN PLENARY MEETINGS AND FOLLOWING UP PRIVATELY TO URGE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION FOR GOB'S NEEDS.

2. FACTORS TENDING TO DISCOURAGE SUMMIT WOULD BE (A) THE SHEER PHYSICAL DEMANDS ON PRESIDENT KHAMA IN GETTING TO LAGOS FROM HERE (ACCORDING TO RECENT VISITORS, THIS TAKES A MINIMUM OF TWO DAYS' TRAVEL TIME); (B) THE FACT THAT PRESIDENT KHAMA'S ADVISERS, AT THE REQUEST OF HIS DOCTORS, CONTINUE TO MINIMIZE DEMANDS ON HIM IN TERMS OF ENERGY AND APPOINTMENTS. IT IS ENTIRELY CONCEIVABLE, THEREFORE, THAT PRESIDENT KHAMA WOULD ASK VICE PRESIDENT MASIRE TO ATTEND IN HIS BEHALF. WHILE MASIRE IS FAITHFUL AND COMPETENT POLITICAL ASSOCIATE, HE DOES NOT HAVE THE STANDING OR THE INCLINATION TO SPEAK UP FOR BOTSWANA. HIS REPRESENTATION WOULD LIKELY BE MORE PASSIVE.

3. AS TO OTHER ISSUES, IF PRESIDENT KHAMA WERE IN ATTENDANCE, THE QUESTION OF BOTSWANA'S SECURITY AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT WOULD (AS NOTED ABOVE) NO DOUBT ARISE. IN ADDITION, THE GOB REMAINS KEENLY INTERESTED IN RELATED QUESTIONS OF ITS RAILROAD LIFELINE, WHICH RUNS FROM SOUTH AFRICA THROUGH TO RHODESIA (AND HOW TO ASSURE CONTINUED OPERATIONS), AS WELL AS THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF. CONCEIVABLY, AT LEAST PARTLY OUT OF SOLIDARITY WITH ITS FRONTLINE PARTNERS, BOTSWANA MIGHT SUGGEST DISCUSSIONS OF REGIONAL APPROACH TO QUESTIONS OF TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, ETC., IN ORDER TO HELP RELIEVE
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THE CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE.
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